therefore, traversed.

2. Claims 1-14 have been rejected as being anticipated by Sauter et al. In response, claims 1 and 9 have been amended to make clear that the optical device is attached to the optically transparent substrate.

In contrast, Sauter et al. is directed to an optical device in which the VCSEL chip 30 is mounted to a backing plate 36 (Sauter et al.: col. 3, lines 7-8; col. 3, lines 46-47) and wherein the optical signal is exchanged in a direction that is away from the backing plate 36 towards a MT connector 60.

Further, there is no corresponding structure within Sauter et al. that could serve the same function as the claimed optically transparent substrate. For example, the only thing that is in front of the VCSEL chip 30 (i.e., in the optical path of the chip 30) is the MT connector. The front block 20 is a part of the MT connector (Sauter et al., col. 2, lines 57-58). The feedthrough connector 52 and MT connector 52, 60 simply provide a holding function for optical fibers (Sauter et al.: FIG. 4; col. 3, lines 34-40; col. 3, lines 61-64). Similarly, the window insert 102 is part of the MT connector and is aligned with the VCSEL device 30 using the guide pins 26, 28 (Sauter et al., col. 4, lines 21-27).

Since the VCSEL device is secured to the backing plate (Sauter et al., col. 4, lines 37-39), Sauter et al. does not operate in the same way or contain the same structure as that of the claimed invention. Since Sauter et al. is not the same, the rejection is believed to be improper and should be withdrawn.

3. Allowance of claims 1-14, as now presented, is believed to be in order and such action is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject application, he is respectfully requested to telephone applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,
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Marked-Up Claims

1. (Once Amended) A method of transmitting an optical communications signal, such method comprising the steps of:

disposing a plurality of optical gratings on a surface of an optically transparent substrate;

[disposing] attaching an optical array having a plurality of optical ports [adjacent] to the optically transparent substrate, [such] so that the optically transparent substrate mechanically supports the optical array and so that an axis of transmission of the optical array passes directly through the substrate; and

transmitting a plurality of optical signals of the optical array substantially through the plurality of optical gratings in the substrate.

9. (Once Amended) An apparatus for transmitting an optical communications signal, such apparatus comprising:

an optically transparent substrate;

an optical array, having a plurality of optical ports, [disposed on] attached to a surface of the optically transparent substrate, [such] so that the optically transparent substrate mechanically supports the optical array and so that a plurality of transmission paths of the optical array pass directly through the substrate; and

a plurality of optical gratings disposed on a surface of the substrate, such that the transmission paths of the optical array pass substantially through the plurality of optical gratings.